Amendment # 1

to the

Ottawa National Forest

2006 Land and Resource Management Plan

July 13, 2007
(Administrative correction done August 7, 2007)

Amendment #1 incorporates amended management direction for Management Area 8.1 to incorporate Comprehensive River Management Plans for the designated Wild and Scenic Rivers on the Ottawa National Forest.

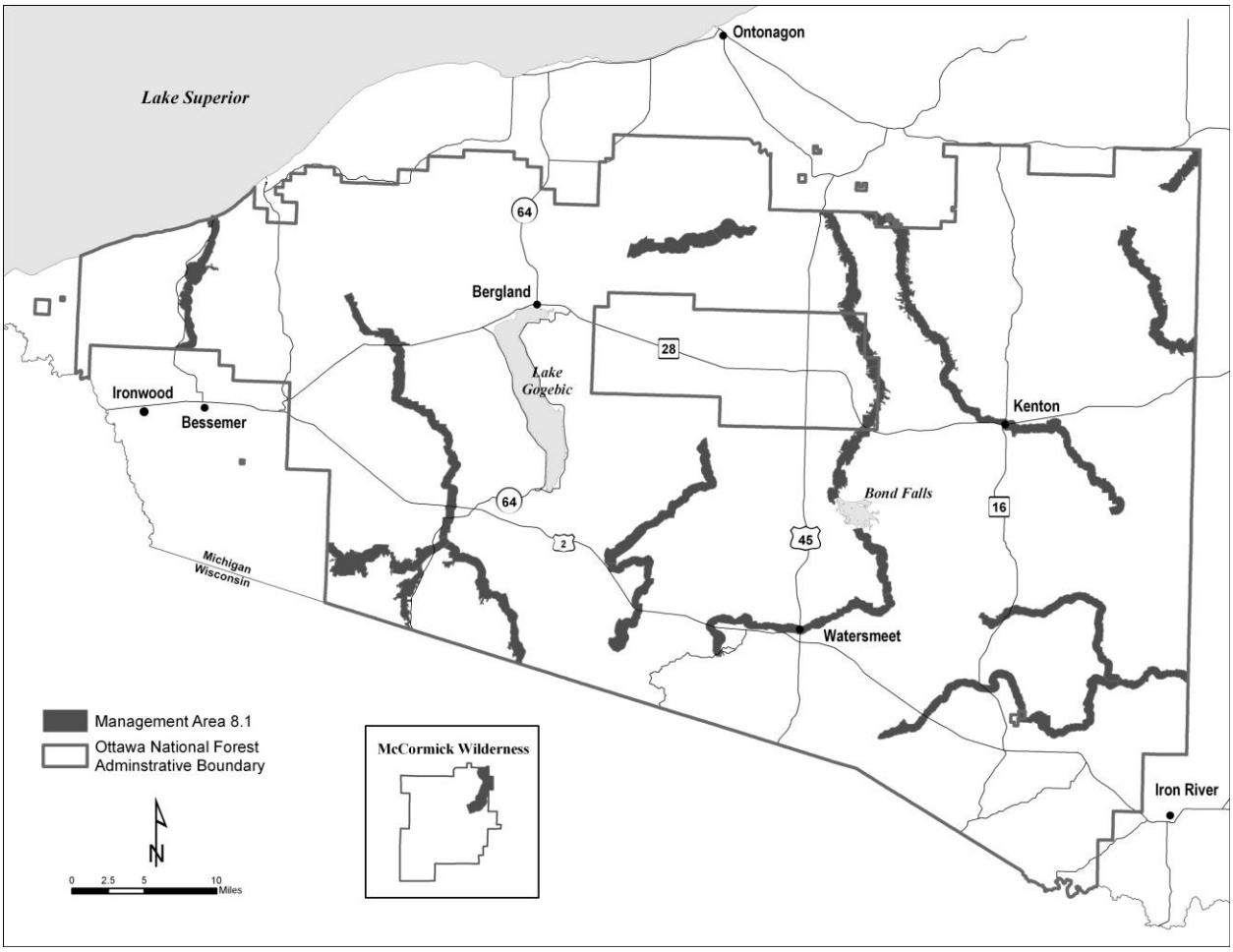
This amendment replaces pages 3-71 to 3-81 of the Ottawa National Forest 2006 Land and Resource Management Plan (2006 Forest Plan) with the following pages 3-71 through 3-81.8. After posting the replacement pages, retain this transmittal and place it in the front of the 2006 Forest Plan.

This correction to Amendment #1 replaces page 3-71 to correct a map which was in error on that page. All remaining pages from Amendment #1 remain the same.

After posting the replacement pages, retain this transmittal and place it in the front of the 2006 Forest Plan.

Management Prescription 8.1

Figure 3-1. Management Prescription 8.1



Purpose

The following desired conditions (goals), management standards, and guidelines apply to the corridors of Congressionally designated Wild and Scenic River segments of the Black, Ontonagon, Paint, Presque Isle, Sturgeon, and Yellow Dog Rivers within the Ottawa National Forest. The intent of this management direction is to protect and enhance water quality, free-flowing characteristics, and outstandingly remarkable values of each of these river segments.

In the case of conflicting management direction between MA 8.1 and overlapping MAs (such as MAs 5.1 and 5.2, McCormick and Sturgeon River Gorge Wildernesses, or MA 8.3 Special Interest Areas) or forestwide direction, the more restrictive shall apply. See Figure 1 for delineation of designated Wild and Scenic River corridors.

Area Description

The management area encompasses approximately 95,500 acres, of which about 71,400 acres are NFS lands. The Michigan Scenic Rivers Act of 1991 established classifications for the designated portions of the Black, Ontonagon, Presque Isle, Paint, Sturgeon, and Yellow Dog Rivers based upon the levels of development present in 1991. Congressionally designated river segments and their classifications are described as follows:

Black River

The 14-mile segment from the Ottawa National Forest boundary to Lake Superior, as a Scenic River.

Ontonagon River

Segments of certain tributaries, totaling 170 miles as follows:

(A) The 52-mile segment of the East Branch Ontonagon from its origin at Spring Lake to the Ottawa National Forest boundary in the following classifications:

  (i) The 29-mile segment from its origin at Spring Lake to its confluence with an unnamed stream in Section 30, Township 48 North, Range 37 West, as a Recreational River; and

  (ii) The 23-mile segment from its confluence with an unnamed stream in Section 30, Township 48 North, Range 37 West, to the Ottawa National Forest Boundary, as a Wild River.

(B) The 67-mile segment of the Middle Branch Ontonagon, from its origin at Crooked Lake to the northern boundary of the Ottawa National Forest in the following classifications:

  (i) The 23-mile segment from its origin at Crooked Lake to Burned Dam, as a Recreational River;

  (ii) The 9-mile segment from Burned Dam to Bond Falls Flowage as a Scenic River;

  (iii) The 8-mile segment from Bond Falls Flowage to Agate Falls, as a Recreational River;

  (iv) The 7-mile segment from Agate Falls to Trout Creek, as a Scenic River; and

  (v) The 20-mile segment from Trout Creek to the northern boundary of the Ottawa National Forest, as a Wild River.

(C) The 33-mile segment of the Cisco Branch Ontonagon from its origin at Cisco Lake Dam to its confluence with Ten-Mile Creek south of Ewen in the following classifications:

  (i) The 14-mile segment from the origin of the Cisco Branch Ontonagon River at Cisco Lake Dam to the County Road 527 crossing, as a Recreational River; and

  (ii) The 19-mile segment from the County Road 527 crossing to the confluence of the Cisco Branch and Ten-Mile Creek, as a Scenic River.

(D) The 18-mile segment of the West Branch Ontonagon from its confluence with Cascade Falls to Victoria Reservoir, in the following classifications:

  (i) The 13-mile segment from its confluence with Cascade Falls to its confluence with the South Branch Ontonagon, as a Recreational River; and

(ii) The 5-mile segment from its confluence with the South Branch Ontonagon to Victoria Reservoir, as a Recreational River.

Paint River

Segments of the mainstream and certain tributaries totaling 52 miles in the following classifications:

(A) The 6-mile segment of the mainstream from the confluence of the North and South Branches of the Paint to the Ottawa National Forest boundary, as a Recreational river;

(B) The 17-mile segment of the North Branch Paint from its origin at Mallard Lake to its confluence with the South Branch Paint, as a Recreational River; and

(C) The 29-mile segment of the South Branch Paint from its origin at Paint River Springs to its confluence with the North Branch Paint, as a Recreational River.

Presque Isle River

Segments of the mainstream and certain tributaries totaling 72 miles as follows:

(A) The 28-mile segment of the mainstream from the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Presque Isle to Minnewawa Falls in the following classifications:

(i) The 22-mile segment from the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Presque Isle to Michigan State Highway 28, as a Recreational River; and

(ii) The 6-mile segment from Michigan State Highway 28 to Minnewawa Falls, as a Scenic River.

(B) The 19-mile segment of the East Branch Presque Isle within the Ottawa National Forest, as a Recreational River;

(C) The 7-mile segment of the South Branch Presque Isle within the Ottawa National Forest, as a Recreational River; and

(D) The 18-mile segment of the West Branch Presque Isle within the Ottawa National Forest, as a Scenic river.

Sturgeon River

The 28-mile segment from its entry into the Ottawa National Forest to the northern boundary of the Ottawa National Forest in the following classifications:

(A) The 20-mile segment from its entry into the Ottawa National Forest to Prickett Lake, as a Wild River (portions of this segment are within the Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness and will be managed consistent with those wilderness values); and

(B) The 8-mile segment from the outlet of Prickett Lake Dam to the northern boundary of the Ottawa National Forest, as a Scenic river.

Yellow Dog

The 4-mile segment from its origin at the outlet of Bulldog Lake Dam to the boundary of the Ottawa National Forest, as a Wild river (this entire segment is within the McCormick Wilderness and will be managed consistent with those wilderness values).

Desired Condition of the Land

Desired Conditions Common to All River Segments

In river corridors where existing resource conditions differ from desired resource conditions, management actions shall be designed to move resources toward the desired conditions described below. Where existing resource conditions are the same as the desired conditions, management actions shall be designed to maintain those conditions.

Water Quality/Free-flow

The designated river has excellent water quality that supports diverse aquatic communities. The river segment exists in a free-flowing condition with a range of flows that provide optimum conditions for fish, wildlife, natural processes, and channel integrity.

Recreation

Designated river corridors provide opportunities for a variety of river-related recreation experiences. Motorized recreational vehicle access is allowed only on roads and trails designated for such uses. Developed recreation facilities are managed to protect and enhance the rivers' resources. Dispersed recreation sites are compatible with river values.

Designated river corridors provide outstanding opportunities for visitor education regarding cultural and historic resources, geology, hydrologic conditions, wildlife, fish, ecological resources, and natural processes that attract visitors from outside this geographic region. Interpretive efforts are designed to enhance recreational experiences, influence proper stewardship behaviors, and protect river resources.

Geology

Relatively natural and undisturbed ecological conditions, such as stable rainfall and runoff patterns, and natural succession of vegetation in the designated river corridors, help maintain the rivers in a state of dynamic equilibrium with natural erosional and depositional processes occurring at local scales. Changes in stream channel characteristics and valley walls occur at normal rates and extent. Riparian habitat management and stabilization of human caused or accelerated erosion are designed to allow natural processes to continue and to blend with the natural landscape. All geological features are natural in appearance, free from human defacement, damage, and destruction.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Designated rivers, their corridors, and associated ecological communities are diverse in composition and structure. They support native and desired non-native fish and wildlife species appropriate to ecological site and hydrologic characteristics. Habitat conditions contribute to the viability of gray wolves, bald eagles, and other threatened, endangered and Regional Forester Sensitive Species populations. Herbivory does not impact ecosystem functions.

Habitat features necessary to enable wildlife species to use the river corridors as migration and dispersal routes across the landscape of the Ottawa National Forest are abundant. Large standing dead and live cavity trees are common and readily available to primary and secondary cavity nesters, bark gleaners, and decomposers. Similarly, optimal amounts of large downed woody debris lies on the forest floor within the river corridors, providing habitat for species that need them, including amphibians, small mammals, decomposers, and predatory insects. Decomposing woody material is abundant to provide nursery sites for seedling establishment, moisture retention, and soil-building processes.

Aquatic habitat condition for fish supports a diverse, productive, and stable aquatic community typical of that found in these rivers. Sediments are predominately cobble or gravel in rivers with moderate to high gradients. Rivers have a complex morphology including a near equal number of riffles and pools, numerous pieces of large woody debris, and abundant shade from large, long-lived riparian trees.

Vegetation

River corridors are composed of diverse, dynamic, and complex native vegetation types. Vegetative communities vary by ecotonal zones ranging from terrestrial to aquatic. Native vegetation occurs in various successional stages, including forest openings, but climax communities are common and are tied to the site potential of the ecological units where they occur. Native trees, shrubs, herbaceous and emergent vegetation functions in a variety of ways, such as providing shade to moderate river water temperature, a source of fine litter and large woody debris to streams and riparian areas, bank stabilization, sediment filtration and nutrients, modified microclimate, and wildlife habitat and connectivity. Forest health is maintained to minimize threats to those outstandingly remarkable river values that are dependant upon forest vegetation.

Non-native Invasive Plants

Non-native, invasive plants (identified on the ONF priority non-native plant list) rarely occur in the Wild and Scenic River corridors. Infestations are addressed using integrated pest management principles. Invasive plant treatment promotes native plant community recovery and enhances river related resources. Revegetation of disturbed soils is timely and features locally native plant species.

Land Ownership

Lands held in private ownership are managed in accordance with County and Township land use ordinances and other appropriate jurisdictions, so that the rivers' free-flowing character and high water quality are maintained. The Ottawa National Forest assists, advises, and cooperates with the State of Michigan and its political subdivisions, landowners, private organizations, and individuals to plan, protect, and manage river resources.

Mining

Mining activities, within the authority of the Ottawa National Forest, do not interfere with the protection and enhancement of river values, water quality, or free-flowing conditions.

Desired Conditions for Specific River Segments

Desired resource conditions that apply only to specific river segments follow. Resources with no river-specific conditions are not included. Management actions shall be designed to achieve or maintain the following resource conditions in the specified river corridors, in addition to those desired conditions applying to all river corridors described earlier.

Black River – Scenic Segment

Scenery

The Black River is distinguished by having exemplary characteristics that define high quality scenery. Visual attractions are highly diverse over the majority of the river. Focal points, like the five major waterfalls in this segment, are accessed by facilities that are unobtrusive and blend with the natural landscape. The surrounding forested landscape includes unique examples of old-growth hemlock and large sugar maple. The maples and other hardwood stands offer dynamic variations in seasonal color. Developed facilities at Black River Harbor and the adjacent park are moderately developed, embodying a rustic appearance similar to the Civilian

Conservation Corps (CCC) buildings in the harbor area. All facilities are appropriate in scale and development level.

Recreation
The Black River provides opportunities primarily for semi-primitive, motorized recreation experiences. Facilities that provide scenery viewing opportunities are maintained or enhanced, particularly at waterfalls, along the Black River Scenic Byway, and along the North Country National Scenic Trail. Hiking, picnicking, camping, fishing, and boating opportunities at Black River Harbor continue to draw visitors from a wide geographic area.

Fish
Steelhead, coaster brook trout, and lake sturgeon runs are restored to the Black River. Resident walleye and smallmouth bass provide seasonal variety to the harbor fishery. Water quality is high and tributaries provide cold water and good spawning riffles for sustained native brook trout reproduction. A continuous supply of large woody debris is recruited into the river, creating complex channels and high quality fish habitat. Human-caused sources of sediment input to the river are minimized.

Wildlife
Bald eagles nest along the river. Populations of wood turtles are healthy and viable. Wintering deer densities are in balance with available habitat. Gray wolves remain viable and within desired population levels. Hemlock forests are intact and regenerating. Old growth hemlock, white pine, and hardwoods persist and provide large snags and large woody debris. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities.

Heritage (Historic)
Black River Harbor CCC structures are maintained in their original condition and within their historical context, which would allow them to be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Use of the area is consistent with historic use. Historic structures are maintained with existing and like materials. The historic fishing village site and CCC-built recreation area at Black River Harbor provide interpretation opportunities for the enjoyment and education of visitors. Historic value remains with no vandalism or other human-caused degradation.

Ontonagon River, East Branch – Recreational Segment
Fish
Steelhead runs are consistently good and self-sustaining. Native brook trout production supports a high quality fishery between Lower and Upper Dam impoundments. The stream substrate is recovering from past high sediment input (i.e. sediment is moving downstream with no additional management-induced accumulating input). Large woody debris is present in the river and is developing in the riparian forests. The river channel is complex with diverse aquatic communities and high productivity.

Wildlife
Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Winter deer densities are in balance with available habitat. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities.

Ontonagon River, East Branch – Wild Segment

Scenery

This segment provides a rich scenic experience dominated by a natural appearing landscape. Vegetation is made up of a wide variety of tree species, brush, and wetlands. Box elder, unusual in this region, is commonly seen along the riverbanks. The river meanders through a deep, gorge-like valley with oxbow ponds, edged by exposed sandstone cliffs. In some places, the river cascades over sedimentary sandstone layers and through boulder-strewn rapids. Access is by foot only and relatively difficult except for one moderately developed overlook with an interpretive sign in a low mount frame.

Fish

Lake sturgeon utilize all available habitat for successful spawning and their populations are maintained at historic levels. Spawning substrates are protected. Sediment is moving downstream with no additional management-induced accumulation. Large woody debris is available in sufficient quantities and distributed as both logjams and individual trees, contributing to high quality habitat for lake sturgeon and other species.

Wildlife

Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Winter deer densities are in balance with available habitat. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Hemlock, white pine, and other conifers are present. Browse is available for wintering deer.

Ontonagon River, Middle Branch – Recreational 1 Segment

Recreation

Middle Branch Ontonagon River provides opportunities for roaded natural recreation experiences. Canoeing and kayaking is a primary recreation use along this segment. Existing access points are maintained or enhanced to facilitate river-related use. Outfitter and guide activities provide visitors with increased opportunities to recreate on this segment.

Fish

The high quality fishery supports self-sustaining populations of native brook trout and naturalized brown trout. High water quality is maintained. Riparian forests feature large, long-lived species and numerous spring flows are protected. Duck Creek contributes to the excellent habitat quality of the segment by delivering cold water to the Middle Branch and contributing suitable spawning areas for native trout that move into Duck Creek to spawn during the fall season.

Ontonagon River, Middle Branch – Scenic 1 Segment

Recreation

Middle Branch Ontonagon Scenic I segment provides a roaded natural recreation experience, along with good fly fishing and whitewater canoeing and kayaking opportunities.

Fish

Fish and macro invertebrate populations are both abundant and diverse (species). Brook trout, brown trout, walleye, smallmouth bass, and even the occasional muskellunge are present. Trout habitat is good in the main river, favoring brook and brown trout. Spawning habitat and water quality in the tributaries of this segment are adequate for brook trout and brown trout reproduction and annual replenishment of these species in the river segment. Riparian habitat is adequately shading the river and supplying a steady input of large woody debris.

Wildlife
Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Winter deer densities are in balance with available habitat. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Hemlock, white pine, and other conifer species are present, and browse is available for wintering deer.

Ontonagon River, Middle Branch – Recreational 2 Segment
Scenery
This segment provides a rich scenic experience dominated by a natural appearing landscape of densely forested, steep river valleys and bottomlands. Northern hardwoods with sugar maple and red maple are most common, but aspen stands also occur, making fall colors a primary feature. Two spectacular falls bracket this stretch of river. Developments supporting the viewing of these falls are consistent with the scenic values, blending in with the surroundings.

Recreation
Middle Branch Ontonagon River provides opportunities for roaded natural recreation experiences. Viewing scenery at Bond Falls and Agate Falls continues to be a primary recreation activity that draws visitors from a wide geographic area. Facilities, scenic overlooks, trails, and paths are accessible to people of all abilities.

Fish
Excellent brook and brown trout populations support the Blue Ribbon Trout fishery. Rusty crayfish are not being spread by people, either intentionally or unintentionally. Large woody debris is restored, creating complex channels and excellent habitat for fish. Regulated flows maintain high quality habitat by reducing erosion and restoring a natural sediment and flow regime. Annual water flow regimes mimic natural conditions to sustain cold-water aquatic communities.

Wildlife
Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Winter deer densities are in balance with available habitat. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Hemlock, white pine, and other conifer are present, and browse is available for wintering deer.

Ontonagon River, Middle Branch – Scenic 2 Segment
Scenery
This segment provides a rich scenic experience dominated by a natural appearing landscape. Vegetation is made up of a wide variety of tree species, brush, and wetlands. The river meanders through a deep, gorge-like valley with oxbow ponds where naturally occurring landslides have exposed soil banks up to 100 feet tall, adding special visual interest. Moderate developments are subordinate to the natural appearing landscape.

Fish
Resident brook and brown trout are common and the movement of migratory species (steelhead and coho) is unimpeded up to Agate Falls. Large woody debris is present, creating complex channels and excellent habitat for fish. Regulated flows maintain high quality habitat by removing excess sediment and restoring a natural sediment regime.

Wildlife
Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Thermal cover and browse continue to be available to over-wintering deer.

Ontonagon River, Middle Branch – Wild Segment
Scenery
This segment provides a rich scenic experience dominated by a natural appearing landscape. Vegetation is made up of a wide variety of tree species, brush, and wetlands. The river meanders through a deep, gorge-like valley with oxbow ponds where naturally occurring landslides have exposed soil banks up to 300 feet tall, adding special visual interest

Fish
Resident brook and brown trout are common, and the movement of migratory species is unimpeded. Habitat within Trout Creek contributes to the spawning success of trout in this segment. Trout spawning habitat is restored through active habitat restoration, providing adequate recruitment of fish to the Middle Branch Ontonagon River. Habitat quality is high with complex channels surrounded by mature to old-growth riparian forests.

Wildlife
Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Deer densities are in balance with available habitat. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Hemlock, white pine and other conifer species are present and browse is available for wintering deer.

Ontonagon River, Cisco Branch – Recreational Segment
Wildlife
Populations of the rapid clubtail dragonfly are viable and beaver colonies are numerous and viable. Beaver impoundments stabilize water flows and provide wetland habitats. Large snags and woody debris are recruited in riparian forests.

Ontonagon River, Cisco Branch – Scenic Segment
Scenery
This segment provides a rich scenic experience including a forested environment dominated by northern hardwoods. Evidence of vegetative management is not apparent although some timber activity is seen on private land. The diversity of tree species includes white pine, hemlock, aspen, swamp conifers, and lowland hardwoods, especially maple. The character of the river varies through its course, as it begins with high velocity white water and gradually slows toward the north to an unruffled meander. Developments supporting the viewing of falls are consistent with the scenic values, blending in with the surroundings.

Fish
Brook trout are found in areas where cold water is found, such as at the mouths of tributaries. Elsewhere, cool-water species such as bass and pike sustain an alternative type of stream fishing experience for the area. Flows are stable and suitable to support fish throughout the year. Tenderfoot Creek is a high producer of trout and contributes to the excellent habitat quality of the Cisco Branch.

Wildlife
Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Winter deer populations are in balance with available habitat. Beaver colonies are numerous and viable. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Wetland and flood plains are productive, connected and numerous. Beaver impoundments stabilize water flows and provide wetland habitats. Deer wintering areas provide adequate thermal cover and winter browse.

Ontonagon River, West Branch – Recreational Segment
Scenery
This segment provides a rich scenic experience dominated by a natural appearing landscape. High, multicolored cliffs border the valley of hardwood trees. Large maple, displaying ample fall color, and stands of large hemlock complete the mosaic. The natural and dynamic variation of river width in this segment adds to its character and the long series of substantial rapids and small waterfalls before it enters Victoria Reservoir contribute an additional character to scenery. Moderate developments are subordinate to the natural appearing landscape.

Fish
Excellent smallmouth bass populations and associated species, such as walleye, thrive. This segment of the river contains very high gravel bed-loads, good spawning conditions, and high invertebrate production. Large woody debris is abundant, creating complex channels. Annual water flow regimes mimic natural conditions to sustain cold-water aquatic communities.

Wildlife
Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes.

Paint River, Main Stem – Recreational Segment
Recreation
The Main Stem Paint River provides opportunities for roaded natural recreation experiences. Canoeing and other watercraft use is a primary recreational activity, providing opportunities for novice and family users. Access is maintained or enhanced at existing locations.

Paint River, North Branch – Recreational Segment
Recreation
Canoeing is primarily limited to high water in the spring or following heavy rains. Some portaging is required around three waterfalls and a dam. In the three-mile stretch above the Paint River Forks, access opportunities are maintained where the river crosses FH16 and county roads, or where the river parallels a county road. Good trout fishing opportunities are maintained. Wide, flat stretches of the river continue to provide the "feel" of a western river and provide fly-fishing experiences at a wide range of skill levels. There are opportunities to view wildlife, and deer, bear, and grouse hunting occurs within the river corridor. Users experience solitude due to the relatively low recreational use.

Fish
Stream temperatures are suitable for trout year-round. Populations of the creek heelsplitter mussel are viable. Riparian forests are dominated by large, old trees that contribute shade and large woody debris to the stream ecosystem. Rusty crayfish are not present.

Paint River, South Branch – Recreational Segment

Recreation

South Branch Paint River provides opportunities for roaded natural recreation experiences. Trophy-quality trout fishing opportunities draw visitors from a wide geographic area to this river segment. Access for canoeing/kayaking is maintained or enhanced at existing locations.

Fish

Brook and brown trout populations are high and dominated by larger, older fish supporting a trophy-quality trout fishery. Very cold water and consistent spring flows create extensive habitat suitable for brook and brown trout. High quality habitat is restored.

Wildlife

Populations of the pygmy snaketail dragonfly are healthy and viable. Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Paint River Springs are cold, clear, voluminous, and free from development or vehicular access. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) are present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Beaver dams contribute to habitat complexity by regulating flow and filtering fine sediments.

Presque Isle River, Main Stem – Recreational Segment

Scenery

This segment provides a rich scenic experience with a dramatic change in topography and flow characteristics starting with a gentle meander through wetlands, transitioning to a tumultuous series of falls and then returning to a gentle meander in the lower portion. A natural appearing landscape is dominant. Where human use is evident at Marenisco, facilities for protecting river values are rustic appearing and blend with the natural surroundings.

Wildlife

Habitat conditions contribute to the health and viability of beaver, waterfowl, shorebirds, amphibian, and wood turtle populations. The wide, intact, and functioning floodplain remains subject to natural processes. Deciduous forage is abundant for beaver colonies.

Presque Isle River, Main Stem – Scenic Segment

Scenery

This segment provides a rich, dramatic scenic experience. The meandering, broad course upstream changes into a straight and narrow valley carved into various colors and textures of bedrock downstream. The rapids waterfalls and deep gorge dominate the natural appearing landscape. Developments supporting the viewing of the falls are consistent with the scenic values and blend with the natural surroundings.

Wildlife

Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) are present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. The habitat corridor connecting the upper watershed to Porcupine Mountains Wilderness is intact. Old growth patches are intact, variable, and subject to natural processes.

Presque Isle River, East Branch – Recreational Segment

Fish

Brook trout and redside dace populations are self-sustaining and common throughout this segment and its tributaries. Cold water from numerous springs provides habitat for redside dace

and trout. Riparian forests are maturing, dominated by long-lived tree species. Cold-water habitat and forested riparian areas are maintained.

Wildlife

Habitat conditions contribute to rapids clubtail dragonfly and wood turtle health and viability. Beaver colonies are numerous and persistent upstream of Gogebic County Highway 525, and deciduous forage contributes to beaver abundance. The spring complex at Snowshoe Lake remains cold and clear without developed access.

Presque Isle River, South Branch – Recreational Segment

Wildlife

Diverse bird species such as black terns, trumpeter swans, bald eagles, and ospreys flourish in the Presque Isle Flowage. The Presque Isle Flowage wetland habitat values are maintained and enhanced through active management of water levels. Wild rice thrives, providing waterfowl habitat. The uplands provide adequate nest trees for large fish-eating birds.

Presque Isle River, West Branch – Scenic Segment

Recreation

West Branch Presque Isle River provides opportunities for semi-primitive motorized recreation experiences. Watercraft access opportunities from Forest System Roads and State-owned lands are maintained or enhanced. Quality wildlife viewing opportunities at the Presque Isle Flowage draws visitors because of the variety and numbers of waterfowl and other birds associated with the wetlands.

Wildlife

Diverse bird species such as black terns, trumpeter swans, bald eagles, and ospreys flourish in the Presque Isle Flowage. Beaver colonies are healthy and viable. The Presque Isle Flowage wetland habitat values are maintained and enhanced through active management of water levels. Wild rice is thriving, providing waterfowl habitat. The uplands provide adequate nest trees for large fish-eating birds. Beaver impoundments provide abundant wetland habitats for waterfowl.

Sturgeon River – Wild Segment

Scenery

This segment is distinguished by having exemplary characteristics that define high quality scenery and visual attractions that are highly diverse over the majority of the river and deep valley gorge. Special characteristics of deeply shadowed walls, moss covered boulders, multicolored cliffs, and numerous falls including the notable Sturgeon Falls are show cased in the deepest valley in the State. The hardwood mix offers highly colored seasonal vistas. Developed facilities at the rim of the escarpment, outside the Wilderness boundary and along Forest Roads and trails, are moderately developed, and embody a rustic appearance. All facilities are appropriate in scale and development.

Recreation

The Wild segment of the Sturgeon River provides opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized recreation experiences. Scenery viewing opportunities are available at numerous points along Forest System Roads and provide visitors with a chance to observe unique geological features.

Fish

Cold-water river communities, including macro invertebrates, brook trout and brown trout, are self-sustaining and fully utilize available habitat. The Sturgeon River has a high gradient, cobble-bottom, and cold water with a complex channel habitat. Tributaries (e.g. Perch River)

supply cold water, contributing to the high quality habitat and providing spawning areas for trout. Riparian areas consist of mature to old-growth forests of long-lived trees, including both deciduous and conifer species. Erosion occurs at natural rates and human-caused sources of sediment are minimized.

Wildlife

Turtle populations are healthy and viable. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Oxbows and off-channel wetlands remain connected to the main channel and intact. Old growth forests are present and subject to natural processes. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes.

Sturgeon River – Scenic Segment

Scenery

This segment is distinguished by having exemplary characteristics that define high quality scenery and visual attractions that are highly diverse over the majority of the wide, meandering river. The extensive erosion patterns, features of the river, and characteristic vegetation are naturally evolving in a dynamic scenic mosaic.

Fish

The lake sturgeon population is self-sustaining and increasing. Eggs from this population are being utilized to repopulate other historic, lake sturgeon rivers. Flow regime allows for natural spawning of lake sturgeon. Spawning habitat (throughout) is excellent for sturgeon and includes clean cobble riffles with deep adjacent resting/feeding habitat. Annual water flow regimes mimic natural conditions to sustain cold-water aquatic communities.

Wildlife

Wood turtle populations are healthy and viable. Visitor use does not compromise wood turtle numbers due to collection activities. Turtle nesting areas (sandy/gravel banks) remain present, though dynamic, and subject to natural processes. Oxbows and off-channel wetlands remain connected to the main channel and intact.

Yellow Dog River – Wild Segment

Scenery

This segment is distinguished by having exemplary characteristics that define high quality scenery and visual attractions that are highly diverse over this segment's length. Management for Wilderness continues to preserve existing scenic characteristics unique to this segment. Not even low impact recreation facilities are found here.

Wildlife

Moose and spruce grouse populations are healthy and viable. Deer densities are low, enabling natural hemlock and cedar regeneration. Unusually high-quality conifer habitats continue to regenerate naturally.

2080 – Non-native Invasive Species

Standard

Activities and facilities required for the control of sea lamprey shall be allowed within the WSR corridors, as long as such activities and facilities are necessary for the control of the sea lamprey and do not adversely affect the identified river values including free-flow.

2300 – Recreation Management

Recreation Opportunities

Standards

Wild River Segments:
Provide a "semi-primitive non-motorized" recreation experience.

Scenic River Segments:
Provide a "semi-primitive motorized" or "semi-primitive non-motorized" recreation experience, consistent with the Management Area designation of adjacent land(s).

Recreational River Segments:
Provide a "roaded natural" recreation experience, consistent with the Management Area designation of adjacent land(s).

Developed Sites

Standards

Wild River Segments:
New developed recreation facilities are not permitted.

The Sturgeon River Campground will be managed to protect and enhance the ORVs, and provide for public health and safety. Substantial additions to existing improvements are prohibited.

User capacity at the Sturgeon River Campground shall not exceed 45 Persons At One Time (PAOT).

Scenic and Recreational River Segments:
Allow periodic maintenance dredging of Black River Harbor to provide a "Harbor of Refuge" and maintain the recreation values.

Combined user capacity in developed sites on all scenic and recreational segments shall not exceed 1,360 PAOT

Guidelines

Scenic and Recreational River Segments:
Recreation facilities such as campgrounds, picnic areas, launching facilities for watercraft, observation sites, and trailheads may be established.

As National Forest facilities are repaired, replaced, or added, the design emphasis would be on the continued use of a rustic style following the Lakes Province character for the built environment.

Dispersed Sites

Standards

Wild River Segments:
All dispersed facilities, river access sites, and trails shall be consistent with the "semi-primitive non-motorized" classification.

Scenic and Recreational River Segments:
All dispersed facilities, river access sites, and trails shall be consistent with the motorized or non-motorized ROS classifications on management areas adjacent to each river segment.

Visual Quality
Standards
Wild River Segments:
Management activities will meet a VQO (Visual Quality Objective) of Preservation or Retention as follows:

Preservation VQO:

- Sturgeon Wild, within the Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness
- Yellow Dog Wild, within the McCormick Wilderness

Retention VQO:

- East Branch Ontonagon Wild
- Middle Branch Ontonagon Wild
- Sturgeon Wild, outside of Wilderness

Design management activities within Wild River corridors outside of wilderness to maintain and protect the existing river scenery as viewed first from the river, and second from within the river corridor.

Scenic and Recreational River Segments:
Management activities will meet a VQO of Retention or Partial Retention as follows:

Retention VQO:

- Black Scenic
- Middle Branch Ontonagon Recreational 2
- Middle Branch Ontonagon Scenic 2
- Presque Isle Main Stem Scenic
- Sturgeon Scenic

Partial Retention VQO:

- East Branch Ontonagon Recreational
- Middle Branch Ontonagon Recreational 1
- Middle Branch Ontonagon Scenic 1
- Cisco Branch Ontonagon Recreational
- Cisco Branch Ontonagon Scenic
- West Branch Ontonagon Recreational
- Main Stem, North Branch and South Branch Paint Recreational
- Main Stem Presque Isle Recreational
- East Branch Presque Isle Recreational
- South Branch Presque Isle Recreational
- West Branch Presque Isle Scenic

Design management activities to maintain and protect the existing river scenery as viewed first from the river, and second from within the river corridor.

Heritage Resources
Guidelines
Wild River Segments:
On-site heritage resource interpretation will not normally occur.

Scenic River Segments:
Allow interpretation of heritage resources compatible with the natural character of the site and with established ROS classes in the river corridors.

Recreational River Segments:
Interpretation of heritage resources is encouraged. It will be designed to protect sites and will be compatible with the natural character and recreation opportunities in the area.

All Terrain Vehicles, Trail Use and Operations

Guidelines

Wild River Segments:

Only non-motorized trail uses will be allowed with the following exceptions:

- Administrative use or under written authorization
- OHV/snowmobile use of existing Forest Service designated OHV/snowmobile trails and routes.

Relocate existing designated Forest Service OHV/snowmobile trails outside of Wild River areas when reasonable alternative routes can be found.

Snowmobile use on unplowed roads is not allowed, except on designated trails.

Scenic and Recreational River Segments:

Allow designated motorized trail routes within Scenic and Recreational River segments only when necessary to connect established motorized trails outside of the river corridors when consistent with the protection and enhancement of river values.

2400 – Timber Management

Standards

Undertake vegetation management activities only for the maintenance, protection, and enhancement of the established river values in the designated river corridors.

Guidelines

Scenic and Recreational River Segments:

A wide range of silvicultural practices are allowed, provided that such practices are necessary for the protection and enhancement of the established river values. These practices should:

- Promote the retention of long-lived tree species, leading toward the development of a big tree character throughout the river corridors.
- Enhance visual variety, increase species and structural diversity, and provide increased depth of view into the forest when appropriate.

Restore hemlock and white pine for wildlife habitat needs using natural and artificial techniques.

Design vegetation management techniques to increase habitat diversity and complexity, subject to site capability.

2500 – Soil, Water, and Air

Standards

Bank stabilization projects will be undertaken only to:

- Correct human-caused soil and water resource damage, or
- Correct soil and water damage from natural disasters when downstream health and safety or river values are at risk.

Native materials (rocks, logs, and native plants) will be used in restoration work.

Close low water crossings to motorized vehicle use on NFS lands and rehabilitate to protect water quality.

Guidelines

Work with private landowners, mineral rights owners, and other agencies to reduce human-caused sources of sediment, channel constrictions, and obstructions on non-federal lands within the designated corridors.

Encourage State, Township, and Tribal governments to manage the water levels in Presque Isle Flowage for the protection and enhancement of established ORVs.

Reduce existing human-caused sources of sediment deposition, channel constriction, and obstructions on NFS lands within the designated corridors.

2600 – Wildlife, Fish, and Sensitive Plants

Guidelines

Restore natural stream habitat structure and function through watershed management, riparian vegetation management, and direct habitat restoration of spawning, rearing, and adult fish habitats within the designated river corridors.

Manage beaver populations and habitat features for the protection and enhancement of established ORVs.

Control beaver populations in tributaries to provide brook trout access to thermal refugia and quality spawning sites in high quality trout streams.

Protect and enhance habitat for the redside dace (a Regional Forester Sensitive Species) by using stream improvement techniques where they occur.

Undertake vegetation treatments to regenerate deciduous trees as beaver forage in order to encourage maintenance of beaver works that protect and enhance ORVs.

Undertake vegetation treatments near wood turtle nesting habitat to provide forage in small openings (1-2 acres).

2700 – Special Use Management

Standards

Before reauthorization of special use permits, existing special uses will be evaluated to determine compatibility with the river segment classification and with protection and enhancement of established river values.

Applications for new special use permits will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine compatibility with the river segment classification and with protection and enhancement of established river values.

Guidelines

Encourage utility owners with existing permits to undertake mitigation measures that minimize impacts to river values.

Condition new or amended utility permits to include mitigation measures that minimize impacts to river values.

Utility lines or corridors in existence prior to WSR designation may be considered nonconforming inconsistencies in relation to scenery goals. As opportunities arise, they should be brought into compliance with assigned Visual Quality Objectives. This applies to the following river segments:

- Middle Branch Ontonagon Scenic 2 and Wild
- Presque Isle Main Stem Recreational and Scenic
- Sturgeon Wild

Construction of new electronic sites, utility lines, or transmission lines should not normally occur within the Wild River corridors.

2800 – Minerals and Geology

Standards

There shall be no new federal common variety mineral pits developed within the river corridors.

Close and rehabilitate existing common variety mineral pits within the river corridors where:

- There are conflicts with river values and effects cannot be mitigated, or
- The pits are no longer needed to meet resource management objectives.

Wild River Segments:
Development of federal minerals within designated corridors of Wild segments will not be permitted.

Scenic and Recreational River Segments:
Surface disturbance or occupancy for development and extraction of federally owned minerals will not be permitted.

Guidelines

Work with private minerals owners to minimize impacts to river values.

3400 – Forest Pest Management

Standards

Wild River Segments:
Do not control insect or disease outbreaks unless necessary to prevent unacceptable damage of resources on lands outside the Wild River segments or to prevent an unnatural loss to river values due to exotic pests.

Scenic and Recreational River Segments:
Reduce the risk of insect and disease outbreaks through the application of integrated pest management principles that do not adversely affect the identified river values.

5400 – Land Ownership

Guidelines

This management area has the following priorities for land acquisition:

- Donation
- Exchange
- Purchase

5400 – Land Ownership ♦ Engineering Operations

Guideline

Property line marking standards to be used are Class C (subdued visibility).

7300 – Buildings and Other Structures

Guidelines

Wild River Segments:

Primitive facilities (including trail bridges) may be constructed if necessary for the protection and enhancement of established river values and if consistent with established ROS classes.

Scenic and Recreational River Segments:

Buildings and structures (including trail bridges) may be constructed if necessary for the protection and enhancement of established river values and if consistent with established ROS classes.

7400 - Public Health and Pollution Control Facilities

Standard

Solid waste disposal sites or landfills are not permitted.

7700 – Transportation System

Standards

Wild River Segments:

No new road construction is permitted within the river corridors.

Scenic River Segments:

New road construction will only be allowed where no other reasonable alternative exists outside of designated river corridors, and where road construction does not compromise river classification or established river values.

Guidelines

Decommission, reconstruct, or relocate roads as needed to protect and enhance river values.

Scenic River Segments:

Limited reconstruction of existing roads may occur when necessary to control road-caused erosion and sedimentation and maintain the existing OML with no compromise of river values.

Recreational River Segments:

Limited construction or reconstruction may occur if river values are protected and enhanced.